

Waukegan, IL - Congressman Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) announced an \$82,000 grant awarded from the Department of Justice to the Lake County State's Attorney's Office and the Waukegan Police Department. The money will be used to expand a domestic violence awareness program and to upgrade radio equipment for Waukegan First Responders.

"We need to reach domestic violence victims more effectively and I am glad to see the State's Attorneys Office using these funds to accomplish this goal. By letting domestic violence victims know there are people and places to help them, we can protect them from further abuse and bring to justice those who abuse."

The Lake County State's Attorneys Office will use the federal funding to produce additional domestic violence safety plan cards and also create a new safety plan for children. New computer equipment and software will also be purchased for the State's Attorneys domestic violence counselors allowing them to better track their domestic violence cases.

The Waukegan Police Department will use their share of federal funds to upgrade radio equipment between first responders. Their current communications regarding voice interoperability consists of various systems and frequencies leading to an obvious lack of interoperability. They will purchase P25 portable radios. The radios will allow first responders to relay critical information to any member of any department regardless of radio frequency in a Real Time Mode.

"Police, Fire and emergency medical crews have to be able to talk to each other," said Kirk. With these funds, Waukegan First Responders will be able to communicate regardless of geographical or jurisdictional boundaries."

The State's Attorneys Office and Waukegan Police Department received this grant under the Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG). JAG allows states, tribes, and local governments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime based on their own local needs and conditions.

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